



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – April 15, 2015
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Robert J. Klee

Raised House Bill No. 7055 - AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT FIRST.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding **Raised House Bill No. 7055 - AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT FIRST**. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) offers the following testimony.

Connecticut is leading the nation in revitalizing brownfields. Thanks to strong bipartisan support as well as powerful public/private partnerships, dozens of abandoned sites across the state are being transformed into innovative enterprises. In fact, this effort is a central focus of the state's economic development efforts. As Governor Malloy stated, "revitalizing Connecticut's cities and downtowns is critical to continuing our economic momentum. We are taking significant steps towards reactivating brownfield sites in every corner of the state."

Connecticut leaders from both the public and private sectors believe that brownfield remediation and development are critical to economic growth and urban revitalization. Since 2012, the state government has invested approximately \$125 million in more than 100 brownfield development projects in cities and towns all across the state. And for every \$1 invested by the state government in brownfield development, non-state partners have invested another \$4. To put this in context, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has spent \$190 million nationwide on such cleanup work since 1995.

The Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development (OBRD) at DECD serves as the state's central point of contact for all phases of a remediation project, partnering closely DEEP. A team of project managers, engineers and real estate professionals works directly with local governments, economic development agencies, brownfield owners and potential developers to bring together all the right resources, including: Planning, design and execution assistance; assistance in identifying and securing financial assistance; direct case management to navigate

the complexities of remediation; comprehensive permitting assistance; coordination with state and federal regulators for a timely, effective review; and project support to reduce cost overruns.

Connecticut offers many different types of financial aid to help those with vision and commitment transform abandoned or underutilized site. A couple of recent examples include Harbor Point in Stamford and Two Roads Brewery and Stratford. Harbor Point is the largest remediation project in Connecticut, and one of the largest in America. This project has reclaimed six-million square feet of floor space — transforming it into 2,300 apartments, premier office space, retail/dining establishments, marinas, a waterfront boardwalk and acres of public parks. Connecticut's largest craft brewery now operates in nearly 100,000 square feet of remediated space. OBRD support included funds for environmental assessment and asbestos/lead paint abatement. In summary, DEEP is confident this trend will continue under the strategic leadership and guidance of DECD Commissioner Catherine Smith whose vision for Connecticut far outpaces any skepticism.

DEEP has serious concerns with sections 12 to 15 of the bill that mandate a "federal deviation analysis" be prepared for every regulation promulgated under Connecticut's Uniform Administrative Procedure Act. This additional analysis will place an even greater bureaucratic burden on the existing regulation adoption process. Adding a "federal deviation analysis" to compare federal "adopted standards or procedures" to a state regulation proposed for adoption seems to be a solution looking for a problem. Additionally, significant additional staff time will be needed to write such a comparison.

Currently, DEEP is applying **LEAN** principles and practices to improve the way we do business. To meet the needs of our customers, we are becoming more efficient while maintaining our environmental requirements. We are eliminating time-consuming steps that add no value. Before adding an additional level of "federal deviation analysis" we would encourage a LEAN review of the regulation adoption process.

As a matter of practice, DEEP regularly makes agency staff available at Regulation Review Committee meetings to answer the questions of the Regulations Review Committee members on proposed or amended regulations. Explaining the relationship between federal and state programs can be adequately accomplished through this dialog.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP's Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov .